A thousand blushing apparitions,
To start into her face,a thousand innocent shames,
In angel whitenesse beate away those blushes,
And in her eie there hath appeard a fire,
To burne the errors that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth: call me a foole,
Trust not my reading,nor my obseruations,
Which with experimental seale doth warrant
The tenure of my booke: trust not my age,
My reuerence,calling,nor diuinitie,
If this sweete ladie lie not guiltlesse here,
Vnder some biting errour.
Leonato Frier,it cannot be,
Thou seest that al the grace that she hath left,
Is,that she will not adde to her damnation,
A sinne of periury,she not denies it:
Why seekst thou then to couer with excuse,
That which appeares in proper nakednesse?
Frier Lady,what man is he you are accusde of?
Hero They know that do accuse me, I know none,
If I know more of any man aliue
Then that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sinnes lacke mercie,O my father,
Proue you that any man with me conuerst,
At houres vnmeete,or that I yesternight
Maintaind the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me,hate me,torture me to death.
Frier There is some strange misprision in the princes.
Bene. Two of them haue the very bent of honour,
And if their wisedomes be misled in this,
The practise of it liues in Iohn the Bastard,
Whose spirites toyle in frame of villanies.
Leonato I know not,if they speake but truth of her,
These hands shall teare her, if they wrong her honour,
The prowdest of them shal wel heare of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this bloud of mine,
Nor age so eate vp my inuention,

Nor

Nor Fortune made such hauocke of my meanes,
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,
But they shall find awakte in such a kind,
Both strength of limbe,and policy of mind,
Ability in meanes,and choise of friends,
To quit me of them throughly.
Frier Pawse awhile,
And let my counsell sway you in this case,
Your daughter here the princesse (left for dead,)
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it,that she is dead indeede,
Maintaine a mourning ostentation,
And on your families old monument,
Hang mourneful epitaphes,and do all rites,
That appertaine vnto a buriall.
Leon. What shall become of this? what will this do?
Frier Mary this well caried, shall on her behalfe,
Change slaunder to remorse,that is some good,
But not for that dreame I on this strange course,
But on this trauaile looke for greater birth:
She dying,as it must be so maintaind,
Vpon the instant that she was accusde,
Shal be lamented,pittied,and excusde
Of euery hearer: for it so falls out,
That what we haue,we prize not to the worth,
Whiles we enioy it,but being lackt and lost,
Why then we racke the valew,then we find
The vertue that possession would not shew vs
Whiles it was ours,so will it fare with Claudio:
When hee shall heare she died vpon his words,
Th Idæa of her life shall sweetly creepe,
Into his study of imagination,
And euery louely Organ of her life,
Shall come apparelld in more precious habite,
More mooning delicate,and full of life,
Into the eie and prospect of his soule
Then when she liude indeed: then shall he mourne,

If